

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA
Case No. 20-CV-954**

FARHAD AZIMA,

Plaintiff,

v.

NICHOLAS DEL ROSSO and VITAL
MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.,

Defendants.

**PLAINTIFF'S
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT
OF MOTION TO SEAL**

Plaintiff Farhad Azima hereby respectfully submits this Memorandum of Law in Support of his Motion to Seal Exhibit 1 in support of Plaintiff's Response in opposition to the Motion to Quash filed by Third Parties Christopher Swecker and Christopher Swecker Enterprises, LLC (ECF No. 150).

In considering a party's motion to seal certain documents, the Court "must comply with certain substantive and procedural requirements." *Va. Dep't of State Police v. Wash. Post*, 386 F.3d 567, 576 (4th Cir. 2004). The Court must (1) give the public notice and a reasonable chance to challenge the motion to seal the documents; (2) consider less drastic alternatives to sealing, including redaction; and (3) if it decides to seal the documents, make specific findings and state the reasons for its decision to seal over the alternatives. *Id.*

As to the substance of the motion to seal, the Court “first must determine the source of the right of access with respect to each document, because only then can it accurately weigh the competing interests at stake.” *Id.* The Court may seal documents “if the public's right of access is outweighed by competing interests.” *In re Knight Pub. Co.*, 743 F.2d 231, 235 (4th Cir. 1984). The factors the Court takes into account in this regard include “whether the records are sought for improper purposes, such as promoting public scandals or unfairly gaining a business advantage; whether release would enhance the public's understanding of an important historical event; and whether the public has already had access to the information contained in the records.” *Id.* Based on an evaluation of these and any other relevant factors, the Court must find that the justification for sealing documents overcomes both the First Amendment and common law presumption of access.

The material Plaintiff seeks to seal in Exhibit 1 includes excerpts from the deposition of Mr. Del Rosso. At various times, Defendants have taken shifting and inconsistent positions about what categories of information should be treated as confidential. Out of an abundance of caution and in order to avoid burdening the Court with additional litigation at this time, Plaintiff is filing the materials in Exhibit 1 under seal, but reserves the right to address

confidentiality issues with respect to portions of the deposition transcript in later proceedings.

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff Farhad Azima respectfully requests that his Motion to Seal Exhibit 1 be granted, or in the alternative that he be given reasonable time to attempt to redact the Exhibit as ordered by the Court to be redacted.

This, the 21st day of February, 2023.

WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON (US) LLP

/s/ Ripley Rand

Ripley Rand

North Carolina Bar No. 22275

Christopher W. Jones

North Carolina Bar No. 27625

Jonathon Townsend

North Carolina State Bar No. 51751

555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100

Raleigh, N.C. 27601

Phone: 919-755-2100

Fax: 919-755-2150

Email: ripley.rand@wbd-us.com

chris.jones@wbd-us.com

jonathon.townsend@wbd-us.com

-and-

MILLER & CHEVALIER CHARTERED

Kirby D. Behre (*pro hac vice*)
Timothy P. O'Toole (*pro hac vice*)
Joseph Rillotta (*pro hac vice*)
Ian Herbert (*pro hac vice*)
Calvin Lee (*pro hac vice*)
Cody Marden (*pro hac vice*)
900 16th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 626-5800
Fax: (202) 626-5801
Email: kbehre@milchev.com
totoole@milchev.com
jrillotta@milchev.com
iherbert@milchev.com
clee@milchev.com
cmarden@milchev.com

Counsel for Plaintiff

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send electronic notification of this Notice to the following attorneys:

Brandon S. Neuman, Esq.

John Branch, III, Esq.

Jeffrey M. Kelly, Esq.

Nathaniel J. Pencook, Esq.

NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH, LLP

301 Hillsborough Street, Suite 1400

Raleigh, NC 27603

brandon.neuman@nelsonmullins.com

jeff.kelly@nelsonmullins.com

nate.pencook@nelsonmullins.com

john.branch@nelsonmullins.com

Tel.: 919.329.3800

Fax.: 919.329.3799

Samuel Rosenthal, Esq.
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP
101 Constitution Ave NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20001
Tel.: 202-689-2951
Fax: 202-689-2860
sam.rosenthal@nelsonmullins.com

Counsel for Defendants

John Charles Quinn, Esq.
Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP
350 Fifth Avenue
Ste. 63rd Floor
New York, NY 10118
Email: jquinn@kaplanhecker.com
Tel.: 212-763-0883
Fax.: 212-564-0883

Kearns Davis, Esq.
Daniel D. Adams, Esq.
Brooks Pierce McLendon Humphrey & Leonard LLP
PO Box 26000
Greensboro, NC 27420-6000
Email: kdavis@brookspierce.com
Email: dadams@brookspierce.com
Tel.: 336-373-8850
Fax.: 336-378-1001

Counsel for Dechert LLP

Kieran Shanahan, Esq.
Shanahan Law Group
128 East Hargett Street, Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27601
Tel.: 919-264-7515
Email: kieran@shanahanlawgroup.com

Counsel for Shanahan Law Group

Walter Clinton Holton , Jr.
Walter C. Holton, Jr., PLLC
857 W. Fifth Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
336-777-3480
Fax: 336-722-3478
Email: wholton@walterholton.com

*Counsel for Christopher Swecker and Christopher Swecker Enterprises,
LLC*

This, the 21st day of February, 2023.

WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON (US) LLP

/s/ Ripley Rand
Ripley Rand
North Carolina State Bar No. 22275
555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100
Raleigh, NC 27601
Telephone: (919) 755-8125
Facsimile: (919) 755-6752
Email: ripley.rand@wbd-us.com

Counsel for Plaintiff